
Tennessee Standards for Instructional Leaders

The Background:

All states and school districts want successful schools that prepare graduates to succeed in postsecondary education and the workforce and become informed citizens. Decades of research have revealed strong links between what principals do and how students perform. It is essential that all schools have access to effective instructional leaders who know how to lead the changes in curriculum and instruction that will result in higher levels of learning for all groups of students.

The state is responsible for ensuring a supply of high-quality, effective instructional leaders for schools. Districts, schools and universities depend on the state to take the lead when it comes to these issues:

- how prospective principals are chosen, prepared and licensed;
- what induction and professional development principals will receive to support and enhance their practice; and
- promoting local conditions that will allow principals to lead successful schools

For the past year, the standards task force of the Education Leadership Redesign Commission has been at work crafting clear, measurable standards to identify the core performances of effective instructional leaders. The proposed standards are based on current research on effective instructional leadership and were sharpened by the wisdom of active school leaders, program innovators, state agencies, professional associations, institutions of higher education, business and community leaders, state legislators and staff of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). Further, these standards are compatible with the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards, Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards, and the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and reflect the conclusions of major national reports on reinventing leadership. These standards are the first step in initiating a serious effort to raise the bar for the practice of school leadership in Tennessee schools.

The commission approved these draft standards and is requesting the board approve them on first reading. It is hoped that distributing these draft standards to all stakeholder groups will start a dialogue about quality instructional leadership among stakeholders.

The Recommendation:

The Education Leadership Redesign Commission requests the Board accept the draft Standards for Instructional Leaders on first reading. The SBE staff concurs with this recommendation.

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Effective school principals must meet several standards of personal performance and ensure that the people and programs that make up the school work together to bring about identified, desired results. Effective principals ensure that school programs, procedures, and practices focus on learning and achievement of all students, including the social and emotional development necessary for students to attain academic success.

Standard A: Continuous Improvement

Implements a systematic, coherent approach to bring about the continuous growth in the academic achievement of all students.

Indicators:

- Engages the education stakeholders in developing a school vision, mission and goals that emphasize learning for all students and is consistent with that of the school district.
- Facilitates the implementation of clear goals and strategies to carry out the vision and mission that emphasize learning for all students and keeps those goals in the forefront of the school's attention.
- Creates and sustains an organizational structure that supports school vision, mission, and goals that emphasize learning for all students.
- Facilitates the development, implementation, evaluation and revision of data informed school-wide improvement plans for the purpose of continuous school improvement.
- Develops collaborations with parents/guardians, community agencies and school system leaders in the implementation of continuous improvement.
- Communicates and operates from a strong belief that all students can achieve academic success.
- Uses data to plan for continuous school improvement.

Standard B: Culture for Teaching and Learning

Creates a school culture and climate based on high expectations conducive to the success of all students.

Indicators:

- Develops and sustains a school culture based on ethics, diversity, equity and collaboration.

- Advocates, nurtures, and leads a culture conducive to student learning.
- Develops and sustains a safe, secure and disciplined learning environment.
- Leads staff and students in the development of self discipline and engagement in learning.
- Facilitates and sustains a culture that protects and maximizes learning time.
- Develops leadership teams, designed to share responsibilities and ownership to meet the school's mission.
- Demonstrates an understanding of change processes and the ability to lead the implementation of productive changes in the school.
- Leads the school community in building relationships that result in a productive learning environment.
- Encourages and leads challenging, research based changes.
- Establishes and cultivates strong, supportive family connections.
- Recognizes and celebrates school accomplishments and addresses failures.
- Establishes strong lines of communication with teachers, parents, students and stakeholders.

Standard C: Instructional Leadership and Assessment

Facilitates instructional practices that are based on assessment data and continually improve student learning

Indicators:

- Leads a systematic process of student assessment and program evaluation using qualitative and quantitative data.
- Leads the professional learning community in analyzing and improving curriculum and instruction.
- Ensures accessibility to a rigorous curriculum and the supports necessary for all students to meet high expectations.
- Recognizes literacy and numeracy are essential for learning and ensures they are embedded in all subject areas.
- Uses research based best practice in the development, design and implementation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Standard D: Professional Growth

Improves student learning and achievement by developing and sustaining high quality professional development.

Indicators:

- Systematically supervises and evaluates faculty and staff.
- Promotes, facilitates and evaluates professional development.
- Models continuous learning and engages in personal professional development.
- Provides leadership opportunities for the professional learning community and mentors aspiring leaders.
- Works collaboratively with the school community to plan and implement high quality professional development evaluated by the impact on student learning.
- Provides faculty and staff with the resources necessary for the successful execution of their jobs

Standard E: Management of the School

Facilitates learning and teaching through the effective use of resources.

Indicators:

- Establishes a set of standard operating procedures and routines that are understood and followed by all staff
- Focuses daily operation on the academic achievement of all students
- Allocate resources to achieve the school's mission.
- Uses an efficient, equitable budget process that effectively involves the school community.
- Mobilizes community resources to support the school's mission.
- Identifies potential problems and is strategic in planning proactive responses.
- Implements a shared understanding of resource management based upon equity, integrity, fairness, and ethical conduct

Standard F: Ethics

Facilitates continuous improvement in student achievement through processes that meet the highest ethical standards and promote advocacy including political action when appropriate.

Indicators:

- Performs all professional responsibilities with integrity and fairness.
- Models and adheres to a professional code of ethics and values.
- Makes decisions within an ethical context and respecting the dignity of all.
- Advocates when educational, social or political change when necessary to improve learning for students.
- Makes decisions that are in the best interests of students and aligned with the vision of the school.
- Considers legal, moral and ethical implications when making decisions.
- Acts in accordance with federal and state constitutional provisions, statutory standards and regulatory applications.

Standard G: Diversity

Responds to and influences the larger personal, political, social, economic, legal and cultural context in the classroom, school, and the local community while addressing diverse student needs to ensure the success of all students.

Indicators:

- Involves the school community and stakeholders in appropriate diversity policy implementations, program planning and assessment efforts.
- Recruits, hires and retains a diverse staff.
- Recognizes and responds effectively to multicultural and ethnic needs in the school and the community.
- Interacts effectively with diverse individuals and groups using a variety of interpersonal skills in any given situation.
- Recognizes and addresses cultural, learning and personal differences as a basis for academic decision making.
- Leads the faculty in engaging families/parents in the education of their children.